

Remarks:

These remarks are responsive to the Office action dated March 21, 2008. Prior to entry of this response, claims 1-9, 11-24 and 26-32 were pending in the application. By way of this response, claims 9 and 12 are amended and claims 1-8, 11, 15-19, and 27-32 are cancelled. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the application and allowance of the pending claims.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 20-24 and 26 are allowed.

Applicants thank the Examiner for the indication of allowable subject matter.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1-9, 11-19 and 27-32 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,553,961 (Hammoud et al.) in view of U.S. Patent No. 3,884,207 (Kuehn, III).

Claims 1-8, 11, 15-19, and 27-32 have been cancelled. Applicants have amended claim 9 in order to place the claim in better form for consideration on appeal. The amendment includes no newly presented matter. Specifically, claim 9 has been amended to include features of claims 11 and 32.

Applicants respectfully submit that claim 32 was not properly addressed in the Office action as neither of the cited references discloses the claimed subject matter. In particular, the Office action states:

With respect to claim 32, Kuehn discloses that charge balance is maintained by disabling at least some of the plurality of cylinders in natural charge sharing pairs [col. 3 lines 56—col. 4 lines 57].

However, Kuehn, III only discloses providing alternating current pulses between an ignition coil of a first cylinder and an ignition coil of a second cylinder of a two cylinder engine. In other words, at any given time during operation of

the engine, in order to maintain a charge balance the ignition coil of one cylinder must be active while the ignition coil of the other cylinder is not active. Kuehn, III makes no mention of disabling pairs of cylinders during operation to maintain a charge balance.

Moreover, Kuehn, III provides no teaching or suggestion of disabling pairs of cylinders during engine operation to maintain a charge balance. In fact, if the approach of Applicants' amended claim 9 were applied to the two cylinder engine disclosed by Kuehn, III, it would render the engine inoperable for its intended purpose since deactivating a pair of cylinders of the two cylinder engine would in effect prevent operation of the engine.

Furthermore, Hammoud et al. does not cure the deficiencies of Kuehn, III. Thus, even in combination, Kuehn, III and Hammoud et al. do not disclose each and every element of amended claim 9. Therefore, Applicants believe claim 9 to be in condition for allowance. Claims 12-14 depend from claim 9. Thus, Applicants believe claims 12-14 to be allowable for at least the same reasons.

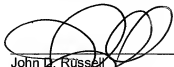
Conclusion

Applicants believe that this application is now in condition for allowance, in view of the above amendments and remarks. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner issue a Notice of Allowability covering the pending claims. If the Examiner has any questions, or if a telephone interview would in any way advance prosecution of the application, please contact the undersigned attorney of record.

Please charge any cost incurred in the filing of this Response, along with any other costs, to Deposit Account No. 06-1510.

Respectfully submitted,

ALLEMAN HALL MCCOY RUSSELL & TUTTLE LLP

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several overlapping loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

John D. Russell
Registration No. 47,048
Customer No. 36865
Attorney/Agent for Applicants/Assignee
806 S.W. Broadway, Suite 600
Portland, Oregon 97205
Telephone: (503) 459-4141
Facsimile: (503) 459-4142